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But the parallels with the north must not be under-emphasized. An underlying Plateau unity is very probably present, despite the impressive differences upon which the classification above is postulated. The formal standards mentioned are largely concerned with war activity and the evaluation is in terms of typical Plains coups. The obviously borrowed nature of this complex and the persistence of a tendency to heredity suggests that at an earlier time the southern and northern areas were one in recognizing a loose heredity with definite selection in the hands of the people.

It is highly improbable that the hereditary component of this complex was borrowed from coastal cultures of recent form. Spier has properly emphasized the direct correlation between wealth and rank, and chiefly heredity, on the Coast. Heredity in chieftainship was probably an outgrowth from the wealth-rank complex in its emphasis upon inheritance. In the Plateau wealth and rank are virtually absent. Further, chiefly heredity gives the appearance of respectable antiquity there. In view of these considerations the reasonable conclusion is that the principles of heredity are independent in the two areas. Or, very possibly, the principle as phrased in the Plateau may at an earlier time have characterized both that area and the Coast.

The Sekani fall quite outside these patterns.

> Each band had a leader, who was neither hereditary nor elected, but acquired his position through force of character, skill in hunting, and sane judgement. His authority, therefore, was merely nominal; he was a leader, not a chief; and if he presumed to issue orders, he had no means of enforcing them. When the hunters discussed their affairs over the evening fires and laid their plans for the morrow, the voice of the leader carried more weight, but no more actual authority, than that of the youth who had just entered the ranks of manhood. At any time a new leader might arise and supersede him.[26]

It was noted above that riches and political power are but very slightly correlated in the Plateau. The chief is everywhere, except among the Klamath, known by a distinctive term of address which designates him as a political official. Naturally this term is not applied to his family, nor are they set apart from the rest of the community by virtue of the man's office. Even among the Lillooet this is true, although the chief holds his office by reason of being born to the chiefly lineage. Distinctive insignia are assumed by chiefs of the Umatilla,

[26] Jenness, *Sekani Indians*, p. 44.

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554/622 Sanpoil, Southern Okanogan, Shuswap, Kalispel, and Lillooet. The practice is lacking for the Kutenai, Flathead, Coeur d'Alène, Thompson, and Carrier. Information is absent for the remainder of the area. The badge seems to be more a concession to vanity than a mark of authority.

622 The powers of a chief vary greatly from tribe to tribe. In the south
692 central Plateau the chief is a leader, counselor, and judge. He directs the movements of his people, attempts to guide their actions in a manner thought wise, concerns himself with the general welfare, arbitrates disputes, and renders the final verdict in all criminal cases which reach him. His greatest power lies in his function as judge. Also, he presides over the council or assembly; here he can strive to direct its actions by oratory and reasoning but has no dictatorial power. Near the time of first white contact with the Southern Okanogan, Alexander Ross observed that

> the government, or ruling power among the Oakinackens is simple yet effective, and is little more than an ideal system of control. . . . It is wonderful how well the government works for the general good, and without any coercive power to back the will of the chief, he is seldom disobeyed: the people submit without a murmur.[27]

The Wishram chief, on the other hand, wields considerable actual power. Spier emphasizes this point, explaining that the chief's word is implicitly obeyed. His position as judge is similar to that of northeastern neighbors but his verdicts are even more binding.[28]

Southward among the Klamath different conditions prevail.

> The emphasis among the chiefly functions is clearly on leadership in war and haranguing the people. Every morning before daylight he addresses them and again in the evening until the sun is well down.[29]

An almost exact parallel to these formal addresses is found among the Southern Okanogan, except that the chief's spokesman is the functionary rather than the chief himself.[30] The Sanpoil spokesman observes a similar, though less formal practice. The relationship with the Plains spokesman is patent. The assumption of this role by the Klamath chief is understandable since the latter is not served by a spokesman.

[27] Ross, *Adventures*, p. 292; cf. Ray, *Sanpoil and Nespelem*, p. 111; cf. Cline, *Southern Okanagon*, pp. 94 f.

[28] Spier and Sapir, *Wishram Ethnography*, pp. 212 f.

[29] Spier, *Klamath Ethnography*, p. 39. [30] Cline, *Southern Okanagon*, p. 94.

of the latter with quite literal accuracy. Often the chief speaks in a voice hardly above a whisper, while the speaker is expected to make himself heard by all, and to provide proper emphasis to what is being said. The herald, on the other hand, is largely a messenger who shouts out the orders and advice of the chief as he rides about the village or camp. He is not held to a literal presentation of the chief's words, but is expected to express the general thought freely and effectively.

In parts of the Plateau the spokesman performs the duties of the typical herald in addition to serving as a repeater. This is true among the Tenino, Umatilla, Nez Percé,[22] Coeur d'Alêne, Kalispel, Southern Okanogan, and Sanpoil. Among the last two, at least, formal haranguing is a performance of the spokesman-herald in his own right.

Women occupy seats in council or assembly among a number of central Plateau groups, and in some cases they are eligible to chieftainship. Female chiefs are known to the Southern Okanogan, Lakes, and possibly the Coeur d'Alêne. They may have been present in other groups, although most informants deny it today. The Lakes declare that no greater or more capable chief has even been known to them than a particular woman who held office fairly recently. It is quite clear that female chieftainship is here a simple outgrowth of the principle of political and sexual equality.[23]

The Shuswap, Lower Thompson, and Carrier occasionally recognize female chiefs as well, but here the implications are quite different. A woman is accepted only for the sake of perpetuating a particular lineage in the absence of a male successor.[24] The coastal origin of this practice is obvious.

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

Class and Rank

Peoples of the Plateau have remained impressively unreceptive to the notions of caste which are so strongly emphasized on the Coast. The only tribes in any way influenced are those in direct contact along the boundary of the two areas. The Plateau attitude is not one of passive disregard; on the contrary, the opposite principle, that of equality of man, is given active and emotional support.

The Sanpoil are among the most outspoken in this respect. To them

[22] Spinden, *Nez Percé Indians*, p. 243.

[23] Cline, *Southern Okanogan*, pp. 95 f.; Teit, *Salishan Tribes*, p. 154.

[24] Teit, *Shuswap*, p. 582; Morice, *Canadian Dénés*, p. 202.

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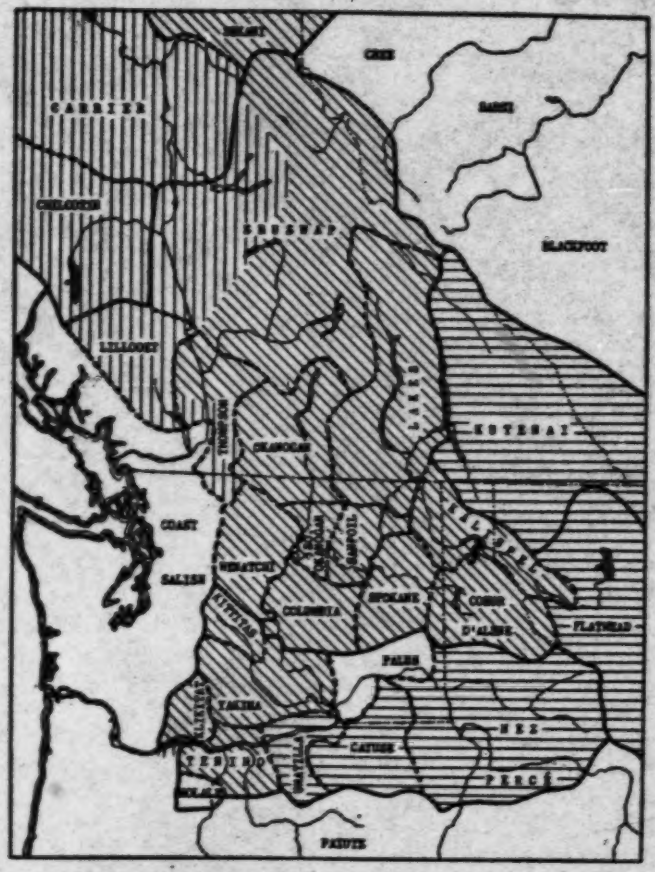
class distinctions are unthinkable, to say nothing of slavery. The latter is looked upon as an unaccountable custom of foreigners. Every adult citizen—man or woman—is a member of the general assembly of his village. When it becomes necessary to select a chief from a new



MAP 4. Class and rank. *Vertical hatching:* modified coastal pattern; *diagonal hatching:* no stratification; *horizontal hatching:* ranking according to war honors.

lineage, any man is eligible. The selection is made without regard to any quality suggestive of class. The chief is in no way set apart socially; he is as approachable as any man in the group. Nor does wealth carry any suggestion of advance in status. Indeed, wealth is rare. Only sha-

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mans can properly be counted rich men and whatever prestige they possess is the result of their unusual supernatural powers, not their riches. The scarcity of wealth is to a marked degree the result of the belief in the equality of mankind. No justification can be found for one man having more than another, but every man is deserving of a living. Salmon is the staple food; the huge catches of this fish taken each summer at the great fish weirs are divided equally among all present, foreigners included. A man need take no part in the fishing activities to be entitled to a share in the daily distributions. Likewise the meat obtained on a hunting expedition is divided equally among all those who take part regardless of what members actually killed the game. But reward for individual initiative is not lacking. Participation in the activities of weir fishing carries distinct honors. More materially, salmon taken with a spear is the property of the individual spearman (but every man is given his turn on the fishing platform). And game taken by the individual hunter is his property. Women always retain the products of their individual labors at berry picking or root gathering. Yet it is never necessary for a person to go hungry if there is food in the village. A single meal or a whole winter's lodging and meals is never denied a man.

In the quest for supernatural power equality also plays its role. This activity is open equally to every man and every woman, not to only a privileged few as on parts of the Coast. Very few men fail to achieve at least one guardian spirit.[35]

A pointed statement by Alexander Ross indicates that similar conditions and attitudes characterized the Southern Okanogan in earlier times. "Their general maxim is, that Indians were born to be free, and that no man has a natural right to the obedience of another, except he be rich in horses and has many wives."[36] The last phrase is ambiguous: it may indicate that chiefs here were richer than the average man. Slavery is utterly unknown; class concepts are completely absent.[37]

The Kalispel, Lakes, Spokane, and Wenatchi participate in this strong emphasis on equality, though perhaps not to the same degree as the Sanpoil and Southern Okanogan. Among all other non-peripheral groups social equality is the distinct rule for freemen, but slaves make their appearance in small numbers. On the south and west, coastal

[35] Ray, *Sanpoil and Nespelem*, pp. 25 f.
[36] Ross, *Adventures*, p. 292.
[37] Cline, *Southern Okanogan*, pp. 87, 98.

influence is observable, while on the east the Plains pattern of rank according to prowess in war has made a distinct impression.

Quite typical coastal class distinctions are present among the Lower Chinook at the mouth of the Columbia River. The Wishram of the Dalles serve as intermediaries between the Lower Chinook and the Plateau in trading activities. It is not surprising, therefore, that they recognize certain vague social distinctions.

> Three classes were recognized in addition to slaves, who stood outside the social structure. While these represented gradations of wealth, they were not primarily such since chiefs were not always among the wealthiest persons, and they in turn were not always chiefs. . . . A lowest class individual was specified as poor, owning no slaves and little of anything else.[38]

To the south, among the Klamath, social stratification is but weakly developed. In contrast to the Wishram, however, chiefs are invariably wealthy. Beyond these there is little difference in wealth from richest to poorest, a condition quite characteristic of the Plateau. Social position is not a matter of heredity.[39]

On the western edge of the Canadian Plateau, there is a certain awareness of class distinctions based upon descent. Among the Lillooet the descendents of chiefs "formed an aristocracy but had no privileges of any kind." But further there exists "a nobility of merit" in which membership is acquired through wealth, wisdom, oratory, and liberality. Men constituting this group are called "chiefs" as well as those belonging to the "nobility of rank." "The hereditary chiefs were looked upon as the real chiefs of communities, even although other men called chiefs might have greater influence and power."[40] This recognition of a loose hereditary nobility is found among the western Lillooet only; it has never reached the easternmost villages, or at least it is denied today. Furthermore, the "chiefs" of this aristocracy are sept chiefs, not political chiefs as such. Teit assumes that the first Lillooet septs were simple village groups. There is reason to believe that the political chiefs of these groups were quite strictly hereditary, as they are among the eastern Lillooet today. This would have provided a fertile base for the growth of sept distinctions under coastal influence. Thus the radical difference between western Lillooet organization and typical Plateau structure appears to be the result of very recent and rather

[38] Spier and Sapir, *Wishram Ethnography*, p. 211. [39] Spier, *Klamath Ethnography*, p. 307.
[40] Teit, *Lillooet Indians*, pp. 254 f.

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simple reinterpretations. The recency is attested not only by the limited distribution but also by the existence of the "nobility of merit," an anomaly in a class society. This is obviously a concession to persisting Plateau social standards. Teit observes that

> it is quite evident that this clan organization must have a common origin with that of the Coast Salish. . . . We may safely conclude that the clan system was introduced through intercourse with the coast tribes, who, in their turn, seem to have adopted it from their northern neighbors.[41]

This would also be true, by implication, of class distinctions.

Similar conditions exist among the Shuswap. The western groups have recently adopted sept and class organization, while the eastern bulk of the tribe has retained typical Plateau social culture. In this case the period of adoption is very recent and quite definite.

> The organization of the [Fraser] Canyon division, and all of the bands of the Fraser River division north of Dog Creek, was based upon the system obtaining among the Carrier and Chilcotin. By 1850 the Lake division had also adopted this system in nearly all its details, and the Dog Creek band was very much influenced by it. At the same date the Pavilion band had adopted several features of a similar system prevailing among the Lillooet, and the High Bar band was beginning to be influenced by it also. The Indians state explicitly that these customs were introduced through the Canyon division, who had obtained them from the Chilcotin, and through the Soda Creek band, who had adopted them from the Carrier; and in these bands the system had its firmest hold.
>
> The people of these bands were divided into three classes—noblemen, common people, and slaves. The first class were called "chiefs," "chiefs' offspring," or "chiefs' descendents," and constituted in various bands from nearly one-half to over two-thirds of the whole population. In most bands there were few slaves; some of them the property of the nobility, and some that of the common people. The nobles had special privileges, and generally married within their class. Nobility was hereditary, and seems to have descended in both the male and the female line. Women of this class appear to have been on an equality with men, and had in all respects the same rights and privileges. Hereditary chiefs of the bands always belonged to the nobility, but it seems that they tended to become rather chiefs of clans than of bands.[42]

This reconstruction exemplifies well the history and conditions of adoption of coastal class and sept concepts, not only by the Shuswap,

[41] *Idem*, p. 254.
[42] Teit, *Shuswap*, pp. 575 f.

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but by the Chilcotin and Carrier as well. The borrowing is in all cases very recent, but somewhat earlier among the Athabascans than the Shuswap. It was in all cases superficial. Deep-seated Plateau standards have been maintained in one way or another. The "nobility" may include two-thirds of the population; a parallel "aristocracy of merit" may permit all men to be in effect upperclassmen; all may hold slaves; slaves are few; women maintain their equality; "special privileges" are said to exist but are hard to find.

It appears unnecessary to go over this same ground for the Chilcotin and Carrier. At least some of the latter never adopted sept organization. But all appear to entertain notions of class, somewhat more fundamental than among the Salish. Morice has indicated the recency of these concepts among the Carrier, while Goldman has ascertained that comparable organization among the Chilcotin is of quite recent adoption.[43] For the Sekani, Jenness provides specific dates:

> When the Sekani were confined to the western side of the Rockies through the hostility of the Beaver and the Cree they impinged continuously against the Gitksan and Carrier Indians, who were organized in the complex manner so characteristic of the Pacific coast. The Sekani not only fought, traded, and intermarried with them, but assimilated many of their customs and tried to adopt their divisions into exogamous matrilinear phratries. . . . The Sekani of McLeod lake . . . quickly abandoned the attempt. . . . The Finlay River Sekani, on the other hand, seem to have been intriguing with the phratric system for nearly a century. . . . They first attempted to establish phratries about 1850.[44]

In contrast to their southern neighbors, however, the adoption of phratries by the Sekani did not involve the adoption of class stratification. Any such concept remains quite foreign to them.

Very different notions of social status are found on the eastern border of the Plateau. From the Kutenai to the Nez Percé a man's war record fixes his social ranking. This record is based upon arbitrary acts, or coups, in typical Plains fashion. Each coup is objectively indicated by a notch on a stick, a mark on a man's white horse, or in some similar fashion. These are displayed as obviously as possible so that all may be made aware and kept aware of one's standing. Furthermore, formal recitation of coups is a common practice upon social occasions. The most significant aspect of this ranking is its relation to chieftain-

[43] Morice, *Canadian Dénés*, pp. 201 ff.; Irving Goldman, oral information.

[44] Jenness, *Sekani Indians*, pp. 46 f.

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ship. Among the Umatilla, for example, one's coup record is all-important in achieving chiefly status. Aside from this, coup ranking appears more honorific than functional. The Flathead in earlier days permitted distinguished warriors to join the council in ceremonial smoking as a mark of honor, but did not assign permanent membership on this basis.[48] This probably typifies a more widespread attitude.

Altogether it appears that emphasis upon equality, as exemplified by the Sanpoil, is a fundamental Plateau trait of long standing. It was not adopted as a defense against outside notions but existed as a basic cultural pattern when foreign ideas of class and rank first impinged upon the area. Superficial adoption of these ideas came at a late date and only along the borders. The most central and isolated groups maintain the older attitudes quite unimpaired.

Slavery

Certain attitudes and facts regarding slavery have been discussed above. The Sanpoil and Southern Okanogan lack slaves entirely and are outspoken in condemning the practice. Slaves are likewise absent among the Columbia and Lakes, and very nearly so among the Kalispel. This central region is encircled by a wide area in which slavery is present but of slight importance as an institution, and the numbers held are small. Only in the extreme northwestern Plateau (Carrier, Chilcotin, Lillooet?, Thompson) and among the Wishram and Klamath are slaves fairly numerous. The western position of these tribes makes it obvious that they are participating in coastal culture in this respect.

The Kalispel today deny that they have ever held slaves, but Teit states of the Coeur d'Alêne that several cases are remembered where local women were enslaved by the Kalispel and Flathead, but that in nearly all cases they were eventually returned home. The Spokane held no slaves in recent generations but may have had a certain number in earlier times. The Flathead, too, gave up slavery before it was outlawed by the whites.

> Long ago the only slaves were a few captives of war, consisting of young women, boys, and girls, who were adopted into the families to which they belonged, and were treated well. . . . In later times, it is said, there were no slaves of any kind, as the Flathead did not trade in slaves.[49]

Okanogan slaves are mainly young women made captive in war though

[48] Turney-High, *Flathead Indians*, p. 52.
[49] Teit, *Salishan Tribes*, pp. 158, 380.